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Author:
U.S. Work Projects Administration
Title:
Employee's handbook

Place:
[New York]
Date:
[1938]

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EMPLOYEE'S HANDBOOK

DEC 23 1938

USEFUL INFORMATION
ABOUT YOUR WPA JOB

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
FOR THE CITY OF NEW YORK
Brehon Somervell :: Administrator

EMPLOYEE'S HANDBOOK

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USEFUL INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR WPA JOB

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July 13, 1939 GMK/HEJ

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
WALKER-JOHNSON BUILDING
1734 NEW YORK AVENUE NW.
WASHINGTON, D. C.

HARRY L. HOPKINS
ADMINISTRATOR

December 1, 1938.

To All Project Employees:

There is nothing in the world so self-satisfying as loyalty, honesty, and a worthwhile job done well. This applies to all workers regardless of where they are employed.

Our thoughts and actions should be guided by these characteristics.

Harry L. Hopkins
Federal Administrator

U. S. WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
FOR THE CITY OF NEW YORK
70 COLUMBUS AVE., NEW YORK, N. Y.

BREHON SOMERVELL
ADMINISTRATOR

December 1, 1938.

To All Project Employees:

"Can I make up time lost because of illness? Do I get compensation if I am hurt on the job? Should I take a job in private industry?"

The above questions and numerous others have been asked by project employees from time to time. Because I feel that it is the duty of every employee to know the answers to these questions, this booklet was prepared.

It is intended as a ready reference to aid you in ironing out your problems. While the rules and regulations included are not necessarily permanent, they will serve you as a helpful guide.

Most of the questions and answers apply to all WPA employees, but all of them apply to security wage employees with relief status. If you have any doubt whether a rule applies to you or not, ask your Foreman Supervisor or Personnel Manager about it.

I hope you will find this Handbook useful.

Sincerely,

Brehon Somervell
Administrator

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
OF
INTEREST TO WPA EMPLOYEES

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WAGES AND HOURS

Keep your Timekeeper informed of your correct address or your pay check may be delayed.

Q. How often will I be paid?

A. Once every two weeks, with the exception of mechanics, who are generally paid once each four-week fiscal period.

Q. Where will I be paid?

A. Checks will be mailed to your home address. Therefore, be sure your Timekeeper is informed of your correct address at all times.

Q. Do I get my pay immediately at the end of a work period?

A. There is a short period required to make up the pay checks and mail them.

Q. What is a four-week fiscal period?

A. The year is divided into thirteen periods of four weeks each. (See chart at back of book.)

Q. Is my pay reduced when I am late for work?

A. Yes. Employees paid on an hourly basis (security-wage employees) who report late for work, will be charged for absence in half-hour units; that is, lateness of less than thirty minutes will be charged as one-half hour—lateness of thirty-one minutes to one hour will be charged as an hour, etc. No provision is made for making up time so lost, and repeated lateness may mean dismissal.

WAGES AND HOURS

Q. If my check does not arrive on time, what should I do about it?

A. See your Timekeeper, or WPA Supervisor.

Q. If the fiscal period is drawing to a close and I have not as yet been scheduled to complete my full quota of hours, what shall I do?

A. Bring the matter to the attention of your Foreman or immediate WPA Supervisor.

Q. Do I get paid when the job is temporarily closed down because of bad weather or lack of materials?

A. No, but you will be permitted to make up such lost time.

Q. If I report for work but find the job is closed down because of bad weather, will I be paid?

A. You will be credited for one hour's work. (This applies to laborers only.)

ILLNESS

If you are sick notify your Foreman or Supervisor immediately.

Q. If I am sick, should I notify my Foreman or WPA Supervisor?

A. Yes, you should do so within two working days from the first day of absence. If you don't and you are absent for more than 1/3 of your assigned hours during a four-week fiscal period, you may be dismissed for "Irregular Attendance."

Q. Should I obtain a certificate from my Doctor or Clinic showing the cause of my illness?

A. Yes, if the absence is more than three days. Give the certificate to your Foreman or immediate WPA Supervisor.

Q. Can I be paid for time lost because of illness?

A. No, but such time, if not more than thirty days and if you are not dismissed for "Irregular Attendance," can be made up.

Q. Can I be reinstated if I am dismissed for "Irregular Attendance" but can prove the absence was because of illness?

A. Yes, if the absence is not more than thirty days, and also in some cases if the absence is more than thirty days. Time lost prior to reinstatement cannot be made up.

ILLNESS

Q. What proof do I need to show that I was absent because of illness?

A. 1. If the absence is not more than 3 days, you will be required to sign Form 556 "Certificate of Allowable Lost Time" certifying that the absence was due to illness. This form may be obtained from your Personnel Manager or Timekeeper.

2. If the absence is over 3 days but not more than 10 days, present a certificate from your doctor or hospital that the absence was due to illness, or a certificate to that effect signed by you and 2 persons having knowledge of the illness, who are not members of your family.

3. If the absence is over 10 days but not more than 30 days (or if there has been more than one absence during the fiscal period) present a certificate from your doctor or hospital covering a major portion of the period of absence.

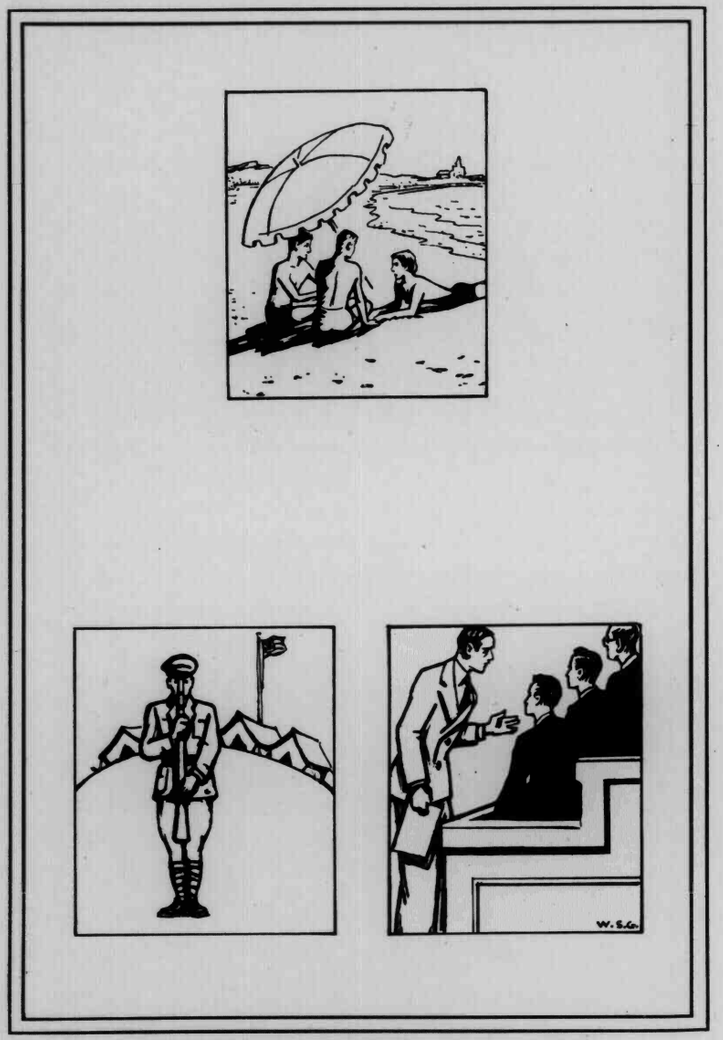
Q. How do I apply for reinstatement after illness?

A. Present the certificate or statement referred to in preceding question to the Intake and Assignment Department, 70 Columbus Avenue.

Q. If I am ill, will I get free medical attention from WPA?

A. No. You should go to a New York City Clinic or a New York City Hospital, if you cannot afford a private physician.

HOLIDAYS
JURY OR MILITARY DUTY



Time lost because of holidays, military or jury duty usually can be made up.

Q. How do I apply for military leave?

A. Give the official order or copy of such order requiring attendance for military training to your Foreman or WPA Supervisor in advance. If the order is a general order and does not mention your name, it must be accompanied by a letter from your immediate commander. Within one week after returning to work, give your Foreman or Supervisor a certificate from your immediate or higher commander stating the actual period of attendance of military duty.

Q. Can I make up time lost because of military duty?

A. Yes, but such time must be made up during the same four-week fiscal period in which the time was lost, or the *first* succeeding fiscal period.

Q. What days are holidays?

A. New Year's Day, Lincoln's and Washington's Birthdays, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Election Day, Armistice Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

Q. Will I get paid for holidays if I don't work?

A. No, but you will be permitted to make up the time so lost.

HOLIDAYS - JURY OR MILITARY DUTY

Q. Can I make up time lost while assigned to jury duty?

A. No, but whenever possible your work schedule for the four-week fiscal period will be changed, so that you may complete your full number of hours for that period.

JOBS IN INDUSTRY

WPA provides useful work until jobs in industry are available.

Q. If I have an opportunity to get an outside job, should I take it?

A. Yes, the purpose of WPA is to provide unemployed persons, who are in need, with useful work until they can get back to outside employment. Every WPA worker should keep on the look-out for an outside job.

Q. If I get an outside job and lose it, can I get back in WPA?

A. Yes, if you lost your outside job through no fault of your own, you may be reemployed by WPA immediately, subject to later proof of need.

Q. Where should I apply for reinstatement after employment in industry?

A. Apply to the Intake and Certification Section, 70 Columbus Avenue.

Q. What is the New York State Employment Service?

A. The chain of State Employment offices at which a jobless worker may apply for work. This is a free service which will try to place you on a private job. You should register.

Q. Where do I go to register at the New York State Employment Service?

A. You will find the address of the nearest office in the telephone book under New York State Employment Service.

Q. May I get time off for an interview for outside employment, or to take a Civil Service or other Examination?

A. Yes. Ask your immediate WPA Supervisor for time off in advance. He will give you the time off if he is satisfied that you are following a definite lead for an outside job.

Q. Will I be paid for time spent in interviews for jobs in industry?

A. No, but whenever possible, your work schedule for the four-week fiscal period will be changed, so that you may complete your full number of hours for that period.

ACCIDENTS AND COMPENSATION

If you are injured on the job you receive medical attention.

Q. If I am injured on the job, do I receive free medical attention?

A. Yes, immediately.

Q. What should I do if I am injured or a fellow worker is injured as a result of an accident on the job?

A. Obtain First Aid treatment and report the accident to your Foreman or immediate Superior immediately. If the accident is a serious one, phone the Police Department for an ambulance.

Q. Do my wages continue if I am hurt on the job?

A. No, but you get compensation pay if you are unable to work as a result of the injury.

Q. How much compensation do I get?

A. If you are unable to work, compensation payments will be made at the rate of 66 $^{2}/_{3}$ per cent of the monthly wage, but not in excess of $50.00 a month for the period of disability, up to a total payment of $4,000.00.

Q. When does my compensation pay begin?

A. The fourth day from the beginning of disability.

Q. What is the amount of compensation in case of death caused by injury received on the job?

A. In case of death, caused by injury received on the job, the amount of compensation payments varies

according to the amount of monthly salary and the number of dependents of the deceased employee. In no case will the total amount of compensation exceed $4,000.00 exclusive of medical and funeral expenses. Funeral expenses may be allowed up to $200.00.

Q. If my disability exceeds 15 days will an assignment be given to another employable member of my family during the period of my disability?

A. Yes, provided a suitable opening can be found.

Q. When I am able to return to work will I be given preference in assignment to an available project position at my normal occupation or at another occupation for which I am qualified?

A. Yes.

Q. Where can I find out more about my compensation pay when I am not able to work because of an accident?

A. Apply to your Timekeeper or WPA Supervisor. Further information may be secured from the Compensation Clerk covering your project or from the Borough Compensation Supervisor, whose name and address or telephone number will be furnished by the Timekeeper.

Q. Can I make up time lost because I am hurt on the job?

A. Yes. If an employee is disabled for fifteen days or less because of an injury received on the job, he will be permitted to make up enough time to earn the difference between the compensation payment and the amount of pay lost because of the injury.

Q. Should I report all injuries?

A. Yes, even minor cuts and scratches. Report injuries immediately to your Foreman or WPA Supervisor and get first aid treatment. Failure to report immediately may result in loss of Compensation benefits.

Report unsafe conditions to your Foreman or Supervisor.

SAFETY

SAFETY

Q. Is it a part of my job to look after my own safety?

A. Yes, you should be careful at all times so you will not get hurt or hurt your fellow-employees.

Q. Should safety equipment be provided to protect me from injury?

A. Yes, your Foreman or WPA Supervisor will provide you with goggles, safety belts, life-lines, etc., to protect you against possible injury.

Q. Should I report defective tools?

A. Yes, it is very important that you do so. For example, report cracked wedges, mushroomed drills, dull axes or insecure handles on tools.

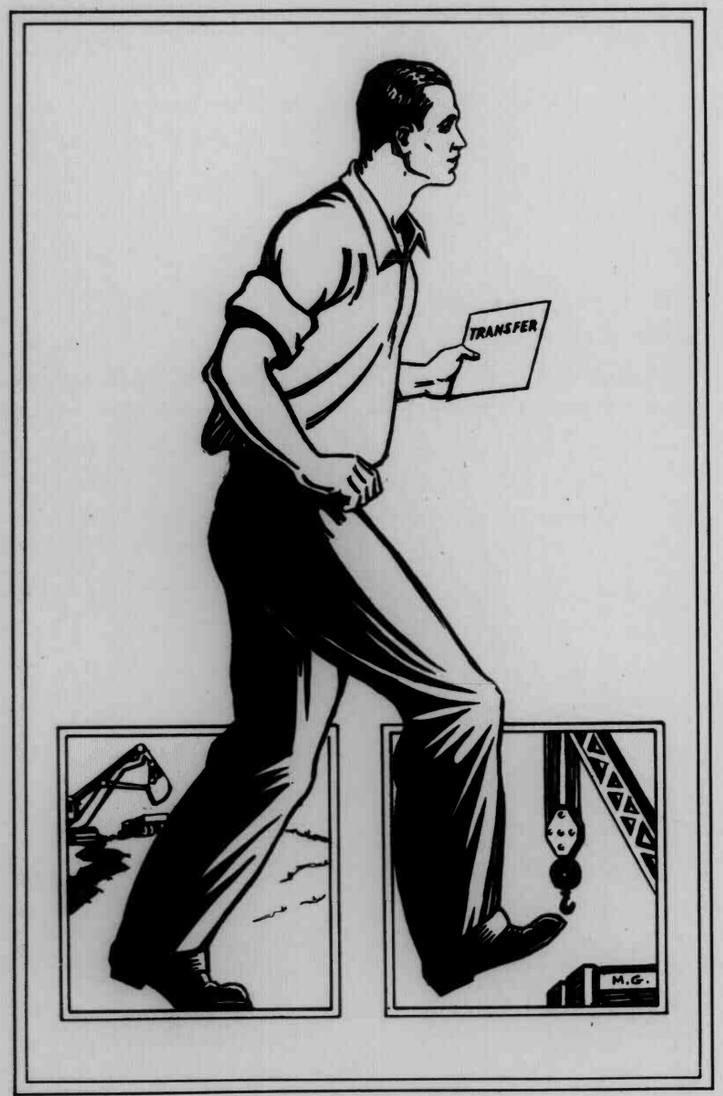
Q. Should I report unsafe conditions?

A. Yes, tell your Foreman if you notice any conditions which may cause accidents, or if trucks are speeding or drivers are careless around workmen, or if trenches or scaffolds are not safely braced, or if things are not properly piled.

Q. When should I wear protective goggles?

A. Whenever there is a danger of your being hit in the eyes by flying particles, particularly from hard particles such as stone, steel, iron, concrete, brick, etc.

TRANSFERS AND PROMOTIONS



Q. Can I get transferred to a job closer to my home?

A. See your immediate WPA Supervisor or Personnel Manager. Because it is necessary to complete the job at hand, it is not always possible to make the transfer immediately.

Q. How can I get my classification changed?

A. See your Foreman, WPA Supervisor or Personnel Manager for Forms 89 and 92, and instructions how to fill them out. You will be notified to appear for examination only when there is a need for personnel in the trade or profession in which you wish to qualify.

Q. Will I be paid for time spent in taking qualifying examinations?

A. No, but whenever possible your work schedule for the four-week fiscal period will be changed, so that you may complete your full number of hours for that period.

Q. Do I get paid while waiting to be transferred to another job?

A. No, but you will be permitted to make up such lost time.

Discuss your complaints with your immediate superior first.

COMPLAINTS

Q. What matters may I complain about?

A. You may complain about anything you want to —safety conditions, working conditions, hours, wages and the like. But you must remember that Foremen, Supervisors and other WPA officials have many troublesome problems in trying to keep the projects going. They have a right to expect your cooperation and good sense in the matter of complaints.

Q. To whom should complaints be made?

A. Complaints should be made first to your Foreman or WPA Supervisor, and if satisfaction is not received, you, or your representatives may take up the matter with your Personnel Manager.

Q. Who are Personnel Managers and how can I find one?

A. Personnel Managers were formerly known as Field Employee Relations Officers. They are located in each of the Field Offices for the purpose of receiving, reviewing, and if possible, adjusting employee problems and complaints. The name and location of your Personnel Manager may be obtained from your immediate WPA Supervisor or Timekeeper.

Q. If I am not satisfied with the settlement of my complaint by the Personnel Manager, what can I do?

A. You can request the Personnel Manager to refer you to the Employee Relations Section at 70 Columbus Avenue, where the matter will be given

further consideration. If no agreement satisfactory to you is reached, you may request further consideration by a Review Officer who will review the case and submit his recommendation to the Administrator for final decision.

Q. Is there a time limit in making requests for further consideration of my complaint after my Foreman or WPA Supervisor gives me his decision?

A. Yes, such requests must be made to the Personnel Manager within three working days after the decision is given you.

Q. Is there a time limit in making requests for further consideration of my complaint after decision of the Personnel Manager and Employee Relations Section?

A. Yes, one week in each case.

Q. How much time should I allow for an answer to my complaint?

A. Not longer than one week.

Q. Will I get paid for time spent in presenting complaints?

A. No, but if permission is obtained prior to leaving, whenever possible, your work schedule for the four-week fiscal period will be changed, so that you may

complete your full number of hours for that period.

Q. May I bring a representative with me in presenting a complaint to the Personnel Manager?

A. Yes. You may be represented by anyone you choose. Your representative need not be a WPA employee but there is no necessity for you to hire legal assistance at any time.

WORKERS' ORGANIZATIONS

Employees may present grievances and complaints either in person or through representatives.

Q. Is any labor organization recognized as the sole bargaining agency for WPA workers?

A. No. The right of WPA workers to present grievances or petitions is prescribed by the established regulations of the Works Progress Administration and any labor organization or individual may present such grievances or petitions.

No labor organization is recognized by the Works Progress Administration as a sole bargaining agency for WPA workers. Any labor organization may present grievances or petitions in behalf of its own members.

The Works Progress Administration does not enter into written agreements with labor organizations.

Q. Is it all right for me to join a union?

A. Yes—you have the right to organize and select representatives of your own choosing. Such representatives need not be employees of the WPA.

Q. Do I have to join a union?

A. No. Impartial treatment will be given all employees.

Q. May I participate in organizational activities during working hours?

A. No. Participation in organizational activities during working hours or on work locations is prohibited.

Activities such as distributing pamphlets or organizing member-drives are examples of organizational activities prohibited during working hours or on work locations.

Q. May organization notices be posted on the project?

A. Yes. Such notices should be limited to information only; for example, the place of a meeting, the time, the speaker and the subject.

WORKING CONDITIONS

WPA

Q. Am I permitted to leave my job during an unofficial stoppage of work?

A. 1. Security-wage employees who leave their posts during any cessation of work not initiated by this Administration, may have such lost time deducted from their wages and may not be permitted to have such lost time rescheduled.

2. Non-security wage employees, supervising the work of others, who leave their posts during any cessation of work not initiated by this Administration, are subject to immediate dismissal. Other non-security wage employees will have such lost time deducted from their salaries and will not be permitted to have such lost time rescheduled.

3. All non-security or security wage employees whose absence might jeopardize the safety of life or property, who leave their posts during any cessation of work not initiated by this Administration will be subject to immediate dismissal.

Q. Is congregating on work locations of WPA projects permitted?

A. No. Employees who collect or congregate on work locations to such an extent as to cause or constitute an interruption of the regular work of the project, or who remain or enter upon and remain on premises occupied by WPA projects, without official consent, after closing hours, will be subject to immediate dismissal.

Irregular attendance is cause for dismissal.

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Q. Can I be discharged from my WPA job?

A. Yes.

Q. When will I be dismissed for absence?

A. If you are absent for more than 1/3 of your assigned hours (except permitted absences) during any four-week fiscal period, you will be dismissed for "Irregular Attendance."

Q. Suppose I am discharged for reasons I think are unfair. What can I do?

A. If you think your discharge was unfair, you can appeal to your Personnel Manager. (See Complaint procedure.)

Q. What should I do if I am laid off due to reduction in personnel?

A. Look for a job—apply to the New York State Employment Service. If you are unable to secure a job and are in need, you may apply to your nearest home relief precinct office.

Q. In reducing WPA rolls, are veterans given preference in retaining their WPA jobs?

A. Yes, but only when the veteran's work has been equal in efficiency to that of non-veterans of the same occupational classification on the same project.

Q. When are warning and suspension notices issued?

A. Warning and Suspension Notices are issued for certain offenses and infractions of rules such as shirking, leaving the job without permission, failure to perform duties assigned, tardiness or reporting late for work without excuse, etc. Continued receipt of Warning and Suspension Notices will lead to dismissal.

Q. If through mistake I have been dismissed and later reinstated, can I make up any time lost as a result of such dismissal?

A. Yes. Bring the matter to the attention of your Foreman or Supervisor.

GENERAL

Q. Can I have another member of my family substituted for me on WPA?

A. Under certain conditions. If you have a Relief status, substitution may sometimes be made.

Q. Whom do I see to have another member of my family substituted for me on WPA?

A. See your Personnel Manager.

Q. Does WPA give extra relief for large families?

A. No. Extra relief may be given by the Home Relief Division, Department of Welfare, City of New York; employees who need it may apply to that Bureau.

Q. If I move, should I notify my Timekeeper or WPA Supervisor of my change of address?

A. Yes. Whenever possible, you should report change of address at least five days prior to change. Failure to report change of address will delay your pay check.

Q. May my Supervisor request the loan of money or my services for his personal benefit?

A. No.

Q. How many persons in one family are allowed to work on WPA?

A. Only one. However, if a family has a boy in a CCC camp or one of the family is getting work with the National Youth Administration, that does not necessarily keep the head of the family from working on WPA.

Q. Am I required to make a contribution to any political party?

A. No employee is required to make any contributions to any political party, nor will an employee's job be in danger because of the failure of an employee to make such contribution.

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THIRTEEN-PERIOD PAYROLL CALENDAR FOR 1939

The calendar on the opposite page is a payroll calendar. The year is divided into 13 fiscal periods, as indicated, for payroll purposes. Each fiscal period starts on a Sunday and is composed of 28 days.

THIRTEEN-PERIOD PAYROLL CALENDAR FOR 1939

1ST PERIOD

	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
DEC	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
JAN	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21

2ND PERIOD

	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
JAN	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
FEB	29	30	31	1	2	3	4
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18

3RD PERIOD

	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
FEB	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
MAR	26	27	28	1	2	3	4
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18

4TH PERIOD

	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
MAR	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
APR	26	27	28	29	30	31	1
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

5TH PERIOD

	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
APR	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
MAY	30	1	2	3	4	5	6
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

6TH PERIOD

	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
MAY	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
JUN	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

7TH PERIOD

	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
JUN	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
JUL	25	26	27	28	29	30	1
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

8TH PERIOD

	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
JUL	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
AUG	30	31	1	2	3	4	5

9TH PERIOD

	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
AUG	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
SEP	27	28	29	30	31	1	2

10TH PERIOD

	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
SEP	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	24	25	26	27	28	29	30

11TH PERIOD

	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
OCT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28

12TH PERIOD

	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
OCT	29	30	31	1	2	3	4
NOV	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25

13TH PERIOD

	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
NOV	26	27	28	29	30	1	2
DEC	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
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Division of Employment
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From: Public Information Section
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION, NYC
70 Columbus Avenue
CIrcle 6-4000, Ext. 786

December 21, 1938

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Lieut. Col. Brehon Somervell, WPA Administrator for New York City, announced today (December 21) that an Employee's Handbook is being distributed to each of the 175,000 WPA workers in this City.

The 60-page pocket-size handbook is intended to answer some of the many questions employees ask about their daily jobs and tell them what they can expect from the Administration in answer to these questions. Many difficult questions regarding labor policy are answered briefly and without quibbling. Anyone reading this booklet can hardly say that a WPA worker's life is a bed of roses, but he will be impressed by the definite procedures.

The technique of informing employees of matters of mutual interest is a problem which is paramount in many business leaders' minds today. One method of answering this problem is an Employee Handbook. A very unusual feature of this employee handbook is that for each chapter heading there is a full-page illustration, emphasizing the chapter heading. It is believed that the introduction of this feature will increase the readibility at least 100 percent. Each of the following subjects has an individual illustration to emphasize the word content: Wages and Hours, Illness, Holidays - Jury or Military Duty, Jobs in Industry, Accidents and Compensation, Safety, Transfers and Promotions, Complaints, Workers' Organizations, Working Conditions, Termination.

Another unusual feature of this book is that all of the subject matter, treated on a question and answer basis, is especially designed and prepared from the "bottom of the ladder" viewpoint.

The Employee's Handbook is prefaced by letters from Harry L. Hopkins, Federal Administrator, and Colonel Somervell.

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